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Oral History Interview

NSA-OH-25-82

with

MRS. WILMA DAVIS

3 Dec 1982

T542, SAB II

By R. D. Farley

FARLEY: Today is 3 December 1982. Our interviewee, Mrs. Wilma Davis. Mrs. Davis, who was Wilma Berryman during World War II, was employed by the Signal Intelligence Service at the Munitions Building in Washington as a cryptanalyst in the early 1930's. She continued as an analyst and was Chief of the Japanese Address Group section at Arlington Hall throughout World War II. Retiring after World War II she did return to the then NSA for a short period during the Vietnam War. Mrs. Davis recalls her experiences during her career. This interview is taking place in the T542 interview room, SAB II, at Fort Meade. Interviewer: Bob Farley. Mrs. Davis desires these two tapes be classified SECRET.

FARLEY: Shall we pick it up then...

DAVIS: Yes, you want me to tell you where I was born?

FARLEY: No you don't have to go through that. All I want to know is your sort of late teenage life and your college life, and then we can pick it up.

DAVIS: Ok.

FARLEY: Give me dates and places.

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DAVIS: I lived in a little town, a little steel town in West Virginia in the Ohio Valley called Beachbottom, West Virginia.

FARLEY: Oh. Really!

DAVIS: It's north of Wheeling about 12 miles between Wheeling and Steubenville, Ohio. I went to high school in Wellsburg, West Virginia which was about three miles north of this little town. All we had in the little town were about 400 people, a church, a pool room, a drug store, and a company stores. It was Wheeling Steel. My father worked for Wheeling Steel. Then after I graduated from high school in 1928, I went to Bethany college, which was close to home. Its just out from Wellsburg about 10 miles out in the countryside. Its up in that northern panhandle or northwestern panhandle. I went to Bethany, and that's where I met the Erskines, Dottie Cornwell Erskine, and Hugh Erskine, and my first husband. I graduated there with a degree in mathematics. Nobody believed that because I'm very bad, but anyway, I graduated in 1932. I've had my 50th. I went back this past May for my 50th.

FARLEY: Thats great.

DAVIS: We had a lot of fun we really did, and its a small college. It's now probably about a thousand people but it was only around three hundred and fifty when I was there. So everybody knew everybody. It was like being at home almost and loved. I just couldn't hardly get home even for Christmas I was so involved in everything at school. Had a lot of fun, and lot of work. And it wasn't easy, didn't have a lot of money.

FARLEY: Those were rough days,

DAVIS: Yes they were, you know, my father gave me a thousand dollars when I

started to school, and that was about it.

FARLEY: Carried you throughout.

DAVIS: That was it, kid. I mean it wasn't because he didn't want to but that was just about as much as we had. Remember 1929? I started school in 28, in 29 everything went, everything! Dad came out and even had me sign my papers, my insurance papers. Because people bought stock on the margin and he was trying to save his stock. Well, he didn't and I didn't. None of us had any insurance either.

FARLEY: Yes, yes. Did you take a job right out of college then?

DAVIS: I did. I was trained to teach high school, but there wasn't a job open, so they <sup>g</sup>ave me the first grade in Bethany. I had 40...45 little kids that had never been to kindergarten or preschool or anything and I'd been trained to teach high school math.

FARLEY: My goodness.

DAVIS: Finally my father said to me, "Wilma, either quit crying or quit teaching, one or the other." My mother had died, just as I finished college. She died in April and I graduated the later part of May, or June. I had three younger brothers and sisters, all in high school and my Dad. I was keeping house and teaching school. Those 45 little kids, wow, they were great. Some them turned out real well. I don't know why but they did. I only taught there one year and then I got a job teaching math at home. Bethany was about 15 miles from my home so I had to drive up there everyday. That wasn't such a simple thing either, because I had to take a street car and then a bus and do the opposite in the evening. The big sum was, I think I was making 90 dollars a month.

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: That wasn't a lot of money and that's only 9 months out of the year, 810 dollars a year.

FARLEY: Teachers had a rough time in those days.

DAVIS: Yes, it's hard for me to be real sympathetic, right now they may get an afternoon off a week to do their administrative work and they're making 18,000, 22,000, or 25,000 a year and then they go on strike.

FARLEY: Doesn't make sense.

DAVIS: All things are different anyway.

FARLEY: Did you get in?

DAVIS: Then I taught for four years, got married, and came to Washington.

I was Wilma Berryman then. I worked at Woodies in the payroll office, making up payroll. I worked down in the pocketbook shelves, and then I finally got a job on the unemployment census. I worked there until that was finished, as a code clerk.

FARLEY: On prices?

DAVIS: Codifying professions, and all that kind of thing, with who was doing what, and where, what location, and whether they were employed or unemployed.

That was in the 30's. That would have to have been about 37 or 38 I think.

I finally took a civil service exam and got on the civil service reister.

The first job came up that I could qualify for was at Langley Field.

My husband was at the general accounting office here at Washington. I went to Langley Field and worked. Things were not easy, you took it where you could find it I went down there and I'd come back up here on weekends or he'd come down there on weekends. That went on until I got my Civil Service status. I only stayed down there 9 months. I was working with the National

Bureau of Aeronautics. I think NAS and it's still, <sup>NAS</sup>NSA they called it.

FARLEY: Still at Langley, is it?

DAVIS: No it went out to Sunnyvale, California after that, but I was gone by that time. I came back and worked at the Civil Service Commission. I got a job as a junior Civil Service Examiner back here after I got my status. That's where I was when Mr. Friedman came down one day. This is the big expansion at the Signal Intelligence Service, the first big expansion. When I signed in, I was number 19 on the sheet. You had a sign-in sheet and there must have been 18 because my name was Berryman, and I probably was the first one of this new group that signed in. Other names on the sheet were Frank Lewis, Al Small, Dee Taylor, Dottie Sinkov, Genevieve Grotchen, and Mary Jo Dunning. Oh, there was one other, Al Cole and he only lasted about, no...

FARLEY: Thats a new name.

DAVIS: He only lasted about six months or a year, something like that. He just disappeared and we never really knew why.

FARLEY: That's interesting.

DAVIS: Yes. I don't mean to say he walked out, he just left. He was a smart guy. In fact we studied our crypt lessons together. He was my partner. But he just left. At the Civil Service Commission I was making something like 1440, and Mr. Friedman offered me 1620. Oh it was the greatest. Oh boy did I grab that. And that's how that happend.

FARLEY: Did he tell you what you would be getting into?

DAVIS: Well, he did. He told me, it was Signal Intelligence, and he talked to me enough to find out what I already was doing on my own. I had read about the Friedmans in a Sunday paper. A paper long gone, the Washington Star. There was a whole page about them. I hope it's in the Archives some place because it had their pictures and the whole thing about what she did for the Internal Revenue. Isn't that who she worked for?

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: No, she was with, Coast...

FARLEY: Coast Guard.

DAVIS: Was the people who took care of, oh well. Wasn't it Internal---

FARLEY: Treasury?

DAVIS: She was in the Treasury. It was the Coast Guard and the rum runners, and that kind of thing. Customs kind of thing. Anyway, it was an interesting, very interesting article about her too. I'll hurry if I can.

FARLEY: Don't hurry.

DAVIS: Anyway.

FARLEY: I just don't want to run you over your time.

DAVIS: Oh, I have to go meet those girls, if I have to come this afternoon.

FARLEY: All right, ok.

DAVIS: I don't mind if you don't

FARLEY: No.

DAVIS: I went to work for Dr. Sinkov on the Italian problem. And Dee went to work for Kullback and I think Mary Jo and Genevieve Grotchen went to work for Mr. Rowlett. That's how they got into the Purple. S. B. Akin used to come by every morning and jingle his money in his pocket and he'd stick his head in and he'd say, "How's Benito doing this morning?"

FARLEY: Usually?

DAVIS: Almost every morning.

FARLEY: How was the traffic? Was there lots of Italian intercept?

DAVIS: Yes there was and it was a fun problem. We did very well on it, and it worked, we were reading it.

FARLEY: Simple system?

DAVIS: Yes, fairly simple. It was an additive system.

FARLEY: Was it primarily the diplomatic?

DAVIS: It was diplomatic, yes, that's what we were reading.

FARLEY: Do you remember where you got your intercept? Do you remember whether it was U.S. Stations intercepting it? Was it RCA or do you remember?

DAVIS: We got a lot of diplomatic stuff, from Western Union. We had intercept too. We had a Panama station because Abe had been down there and opened that one up, I think.

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: I don't know what we had, I can't remember. The Brits sent us stuff, and in fact the British helped us to really break into the thing.

There's something I missed here, I wanted to tell you before I got into this.

FARLEY: About the personnel there?

DAVIS: Oh I know. I was taking Navy courses already on my own because I'd been interested in what the Friedmans did. I read about the Friedmans. I found out, I had a brother-in-law who was in the Civil Service. He was a Head Examiner for Architects and things like that, and I asked him if he could find out for me if there was any courses I could take like this. He got them. The Navy had a correspondence course. So I was taking the Naval correspondence and had been for a couple of years on my own. In

crypt, and I just loved it. I was just enjoying it tremendously. But it's big crossword puzzles, and I mean it appealed like that kind of thing like double crostics and cryptograms and things. I was enjoying that tremendously.

FARLEY: Do you remember any names as to who prepared the Navy course?

DAVIS: No.

FARLEY: Do you recall any names at all?

DAVIS: No, the Navy names that I can recall are the ones that are much later. I don't know that they prepared the course. Wenger, Joe Wenger and Red Roeder, and that was his name.

FARLEY: "Red"?

DAVIS: "Red." Yes and see the Navy was right in the next wing. You know this.

FARLEY: I want to hear you though.

DAVIS: They were right there. It was interesting to Mr. Friedman and he was very pleased. There was never any second thoughts about it. He just said can you come work with us? Because I had had some background in this kind of thing and, well not background, but I had the courses.

FARLEY: He didn't force you to take his courses, the military.

DAVIS: Yes indeed, yes indeed. We did that under two, under two Colonels. I can see them both. One was killed in India.

FARLEY: Joe Sherr.

DAVIS: Joe Sherr. And the other one was later head of the Arlington Hall. He played the piano.

FARLEY: Corderman?

DAVIS: No, no...I'll think of it.

FARLEY: Hayes?



DAVIS: Yes, "Dink" Hayes. Yes he was the big piano player over at Arlington Hall.

FARLEY: Ok.

DAVIS: When he didn't slip under it, and sometimes it happened.

FARLEY: They were instructors?

DAVIS: They were the instructors. No, they passed what we were working on but we had an hour or two hours a day, or something like that. When this group of six got together with these people they had the books and the lessons and everything. As a matter of fact, I went there to work in October and my husband died the following spring. About May or June or something like that, into my shop walked Charlie Girhard, Charlie Hiser, and Paul Neff. Those three came to work with me and Abe. Well they came to work with Abe really, but there were only a couple of us in there. Ferdie Engle, I don't know if Ferdie was there yet or not. He was a translator. I'm not real sure whether he was there yet or not, but I think he was. Anyway, those guys came and we studied <sup>d</sup> or crypt lessons together. They used to come over to my apartment on Colonial Village and we'd study far into the night. My sister had come down to live with me and, I can remember one morning, at five a.m. It was a beautiful sunrise, we all got in the car and went down and drove around Lincoln Memorial because it was so pretty. We'd been working on our crypt lessons all night.

FARLEY: Oh to be young again.

DAVIS: Ah yes. Oh yes, and it was great.

FARLEY: Did Dale Marston come later?

DAVIS: Dale?

FARLEY: And Kirby, Oliver Kirby, or did he? I guess Kirby was not there, I guess Dale came later?

DAVIS: Dale came. He probably was at Constitution Avenue, I don't remember, honestly. I remember best the people with whom I worked. I remember Dale first at Arlington Hall, working down with the engine. You know, making mock-ups and things like this.

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: He'll probably be upset if I don't, but I don't remeber. But I do remember these fellows because we worked together and we did crypt lessons together. I had lived at Arlington Hall, interestingly enough, after I came back from Langley Field. Dee Taylor lived there too-- Dee Sinkov.

FARLEY: Is that right?

DAVIS: It was a girls' school you know, and in the summer they rented. They took paying guests and so we stayed there, and so did Dee. Had a little swimming pool, they had a riding ring, a little tea house out in the corner there, and so forth. It was a real nice place to stay. I wasn't a foreigner at Arlington Hall at all. We stayed there that one summer, and then it was the following year in 1941 I think.

FARLEY: It was 1942.

DAVIS: 1942.

FARLEY: It was March or April 42.

DAVIS: It was the spring 42.

FARLEY: Lets bounce back to the Munitions building. When you were working your crypt courses were you also working on the live Italian traffic?

DAVIS: Yes, yes.

FARLEY: Oh at the same time, for two days, two hours or..?

DAVIS: It was two hours on our crypt courses, and then maybe it was only two hours every couple of days or something. But we would meet with these instructors and then go back to work. We did our crypt work at home. We didn't do it at the office at all, except in those two hours when they'd help us out with it. We spent most of our time sorting traffic and looking for stuff and logging. You had to hand log everything.

FARLEY: You were sort of a jack-of-all-trades then.

DAVIS: Yes, you learned everything from the ground up, I mean, you got the traffic, you sorted it, you logged it, you filed it, you tried to break it and everything. I remember once at Arlington Hall, this was a great -- not Arlington. --- Signal Intell, oh...

FARLEY: Munitions?

DAVIS: Munitions, thank you. Mr. Friedman and S. B. Akin said, "Now four of you are going to go in that room and you're going to stay in there until you get into that Japanese traffic." Now this was the Japanese, not what Mr. Rowlett and Friedman were working on, but it was the Japanese Military which nobody had any success with. They put us in a big room and the walls were just lined with traffic. I mean just filled clear to the ceiling and all. It was Abe, Delia, Kully and myself. The four us and weren't supposed to come out until we broke into this thing. Well, what happened was after about 3 months or something like that, Kully just got up one by day, just took his desk and pushed it back over into the German section and he said, "I've had it!" Delia and Abe got married and I had an ulcer. That was the result, that was the big result. I think probably Frank Lewis finally broke into the military. I mean really got

into it. But it was just this huge, huge, huge, mass of traffic and it it was in no shape at all. It had just come in and been put in boxes. It was just too much for any of us and I must say I had great admiration for both Kully and Abe's ability. And Delia and I were "Johnny-come-latelies" but Delia is a very bright girl. I would have said she was. They were every bit as capable as Frank Lewis. He didn't do this until we got to Arlington Hall and we had some IBM help, that kind of thing. It was so marvelous when we finally got some machine help. Now we had some punch machines and sorters and collators and things like that down at SIS, down in Munitions. But we didn't really have any. You had to do it yourself. You had to punch your own cards and do your own collating and everything.

FARLEY: If people only knew what you people went through.

DAVIS: You can't really handle much volume that way. We were in a room, had to be about 6 or 8 times as big as this room which wouldn't make it too big, but, it was a fairly good sized room, and it was just stacked to the ceiling all the way around with traffic. Where do you start on something like that? It should have been punched, sorted and it was all mixed up. There's Army, Navy, whatever, all in there together. Oh, it was a mess.

FARLEY: Impossible. Was Friedman pretty much of a slave driver?

DAVIS: Not really.

FARLEY: Was he a reasonable man? A personable individual?

DAVIS: Oh very nice yes, very nice person. Delightful person. Absolutely delightful, yes. He was so nice to me. Of course I was very susceptible and he was so sweet. My husband died within two or three, three months or four months after I got there and he was so nice to me and he always was. He was very gentle and very kind and he thought there was a bit of psychic

in this, I think. He said the subconscious worked for you, and it does. And he said he'd gotten some of his best answers while shaving in this morning. And the thing he has in the front of his series of books is that the "golden guess is the learning star of truth." He was really a very great guy. (Mrs. Davis is looking at pictures to identify Friedman.)

FARLEY: No those are only pictures.

DAVIS: Those are the Directors, he's not there. I don't even recognize all of them. Sam Phillips I guess.

FARLEY: Yes, Phillips and then Blake and Admiral Inman.  
Did you know Larry Clark?

DAVIS: Very well, Larry and Mary, yes. Harry Larry Clark.

FARLEY: Yes, Harry Larry.

DAVIS: I knew him, I knew him, yes. But I guess I didn't know him real, real well but I knew him. There were only such a few of us. We partied together, and lunched together, and it was like one big old fat family.

FARLEY: Was there any jealousy or friction among that early group you were aware of?

DAVIS: No, I didn't realize there was. I had a feeling that there was. I have heard and I guess from the very beginning that Abe and Kully had preceded Rowlett by five minutes in their commission and it always showed up. I never had a feeling that either Abe or Kully had a feeling about this at all because they were pretty secure. Both of them had their Phd's and they were both very intelligent men. If there was an insecure one it was Mr. Rowlett, I believe.

FARLEY: Yes, I have that on three other tapes.

DAVIS: I guess, well I've always felt that. I worked for Mr. Rowlett once and he asked me to do something which I wish I'd never done. I did do it. He put me in charge--no, he had somebody in charge of the Chinese section and it was a man, who after that time was asked to leave the Agency. I don't know what. Gee, I'm not even sure if I can remember his name. I think I can if I try. You probably know who it is already.

FARLEY: I don't know the name, no.

DAVIS: Leslie Rutledge.

FARLEY: Ok, all right. Dr. Rutledge.

DAVIS: Dr. Rutledge. Dr. Rutledge was running the Chinese section. Mr. Rowlett called me down, this was at Arlington Hall, and said, "I want you to go in there and take over and run that section, that Chinese problem. But I am not going to remove Dr. Rutledge, he will still be the figurehead of the place. I want you to report to me. I want you to run the place and run the technical part of it and everything, but let's not tell him what's going on. Let's just you take over, but don't tell him you're taking over." Well I got sick. Finally one morning, after I don't know how many months this went on, I started out from my apartment at Colonial Village. I got to the front door and I couldn't go. I finally called my doctor and he said, "Just sit down," he said, "and I'll be out." I just couldn't make myself go. He said, "You're just on the verge of a nervous breakdown." So I had to tell Mr. Rowlett that I could not continue to do that kind of thing. I think it was about the time that everybody was coming back from the South Pacific. Because, what he did then, he said "Oh well I have to make places for some of these guys." So here he puts Major

Charlie Girhard in charge. He said, "This will be an easy way to do this and it won't look too bad you see. We'll just say we have to use these officers coming back." So he stuck Charlie in there. But then, that worked out all right, because Charlie could care less you know. I could go ahead and dance on the desk, he didn't care, he was my friend for a long time. I taught him a lot about crypt and he taught me a lot. That was an indication to me of the kind of underhanded way they played the game and it always kind of bothered me.

FARLEY: Yes, I've heard that from others.

DAVIS: Well, have you really?

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: Well it's not the way things should go. I mean, I don't really like to play games like that. I shouldn't have done it, I should've said, "No either it's on the up and up. If I'm going to do it, I'm going to do it, and if you don't want me to do it then, I'm not going to play. I'm just not going to play this cat and mouse game with Less." He was not that bad. He was a nice guy. I liked Les Rutledge. As a matter fact I went to work for him one other time after we came out here. We started the missile problem together. So he was not in ill repute or anything. I don't think he was ever really in ill repute, I think.

FARLEY: Some personality conflict there.

DAVIS: It was a personality thing, I think, I don't know what.

FARLEY: Shall we go back just to, lets say the early days of '41, before Pearl Harbor. Was there a sense of anticipation around the SIS that something was going to happen in the world and thinking about the Japanese getting ready to move in the Far East? The Germans were already at it. On the move in Europe?

DAVIS: Oh yes

FARLEY: But was there any, as I say, anticipation that something big was going to happen in the Pacific?

DAVIS: You see I was such a peon, I would not really have been in a position to know. Not that we didn't know. Not as far as I'm concerned.

FARLEY: Ok.

DAVIS: I was not cognizant that there was any. I knew everybody was working his level best, and as hard as he could and I don't think there was any feeling that the sky's going to fall in at all. If there were, we surely hadn't taken very many precautions. We had one translator until I went home and got Hugh Erskine out of the Hazel Atlas business. So I don't see how we could have been forewarned. Remember that Stimson had already said, "Gentlemen don't read other gentleman's or other peoples mail." We were just one step farther down the road from the Black Chamber. We weren't that far from the Black Chamber. As a matter of fact, Mr. Black Chamber was running a restaurant up on K street. I went there with the Brig, when the Brig (John Tiltman) used to come over. I was single and widowed and he was so sweet. He used to take me out to dinner. One night he said, lets see if we can go find-- what was his name?

FARLEY: Yardley.

DAVIS: Yardley.

FARLEY: Herbert Yardley.

DAVIS: Herbert Yardley, Herbert O. So we went and found Herbert O. and his wife was at the cash register. We had dinner.

FARLEY: That is something.

DAVIS: It was at the corner of right about 14th and New York Avenue, something like that. He had a restaurant.



FARLEY: Which was in what year, do recall when that was?

DAVIS: Well this was probably, about 43/44/45 in that period right through there.

FARLEY: Oh it was during the war then.

DAVIS: It would be. We had moved to Arlington Hall, and it might have been during the war. I didn't leave till '49 so it could have been. I don't know. It could have been anyplace. I'm not sure that Brigadier Tiltman--yes, here he came over during the war.

FARLEY: He was a liaison officer?

DAVIS: Yes, he came over during the war. And then it was after the war that Kevin O'Neill and John Manson came.

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: And then John and I got married. I went to Canada to live then in 1949.

FARLEY: Ok.

DAVIS: John Manson had been Brigadier Tiltman's, Sergeant at Dunkirk.

FARLEY: My gosh.

DAVIS: When they went across.

FARLEY: I'll bet he could have told some stories too.

DAVIS: Yes.

FARLEY: You told a story a while ago about Hugh Erskine. Would you recount that again because this is interesting. You recruited him after Pearl Harbor? Was it after Pearl Harbor, when we were at war?

DAVIS: Yes, I say yes like that. We were still in the Munitions Building. So it had to be.

FARLEY: Before the war, then.

DAVIS: Well Pearl Harbor happened.

FARLEY: There are three or four months there.

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DAVIS: It had to be in that period and I don't remember whether it was the spring after Pearl. I would have guessed that it might have been. We stayed at Munitions until the Spring of 42, so it was some time between---- No, it was before Pearl Harbor. It was before Pear Harbor because Hugh was there. I can't really recall exactly and the only way would be to find out from Dorothy Erskine, when Hugh came down. I do know that John Hurt was the only translator we had and he was really being bogged down after the Purple. They were breaking out a lot of that Japanese traffic and the Purple machine was going. Monday I mentioned to Mr. Friedman, or maybe he mentioned, if anybody knew anybody that knew any Japanese. So I went in and talked to him and said I know a young man with whom I went to college, who is working in Wheeling, West Virginia. He was born and raised by Missionary parents in Japan. Went to college where I did, but, however, he thinks more Japanese than he does American because he' almost like a native, having been born and raised there. He said, "Could you get him there?" I said, "Well, I'm going home this weekend." He said, "Would you talk to him and see if he'll come down and talk to me?" He said, "I would appreciate it." So I went home and I called Hugh in Wheeling and he said he would be delighted, that he wasn't adverse at all to get into anything like this. We came down and I believe he was back here working within a couple of weeks and Mr. Friedman offered him a direct commission as a Captain in the U.S. Army.

FARLEY: My goodness.

DAVIS: So that makes it sound like it might have been after Pearl Harbor, doesn't it?

FARLEY: Yes.

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DAVIS: But, could he have done that prior to Pearl Harbor?

FARLEY: I don't think so, but I don't know. We'll check it out. I'm sure it's in the records someplace.

DAVIS: Well yes, I don't really know either, but he did get a direct commission as a Captain and everything worked out really very fine. The whole Erskine family finally arrived here Mom and Dad, and John and Bill. Of course Bill was a marvelous mathematician. Bill had been a teacher of mine at college. He was still in college when I was there but he was a student teacher, or associate or something like that.

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: And he held some of my Freshman, Sophomore math classes. Bill was a year or two ahead of me. Bill was a year ahead of me, Hugh was two years ahead of me, I think. The whole family, Mildred and Ruth, and all of them came. They all worked, they all got jobs. Grandpa, Hugh's father, worked out at NIH. They had a big translating pool out there. I think that's where it was. John, of course went in the Marines and worked in the State Department. Ruth didn't come here. Ruth taught school in Washington and the other sister Mildred worked at NSA.

FARLEY: They were all in the area.

DAVIS: They all came, the whole family, kit and caboodle.

FARLEY: That's interesting, I'm glad to have that on tape. Can you recall, let's say the 5th, 6th, 3rd, 4th of December before Pearl Harbor. Was there any change in the atmosphere around SIS? Do you recall that anybody was working 24 hours a day or putting on a swing shift or changing the schedule at all?

DAVIS: I do not. You see, I was working in the Italian problem. I was as surprised as anybody was when they announced on the radio, while were having dinner at two o'clock on Sunday afternoon, that Pearl Harbor had been attacked.

I was not at the picnic where they all got called into work. My brother was here as I told you. He had just come down. Now there must have been some feeling all over that things were going to get worse, because my brother had no trouble getting a commission in the Navy as a Navy flyer. They took him in at the Naval Air Station, and he had just come out of college. I had a Navy friend, a fellow I was dating at that time, who said if your brother doesn't have anything better to do, tell him to come on down. I think we can get him a commission. So he did. He was at the house that day, so there must have been some feeling of urgency. Because people were bringing in flyers, they were bringing in translators, they were starting to do these kind of things. I can't remember, but I think I was as surprised as anybody was. Because I had no notion at the office, or maybe I just was fat, dumb, and happy. I really can't remember having any feeling that there was anything going on.

FARLEY: Excuse me, let me switch tapes. (TAPE I, SIDE A ENDS)

Ok. We're back on now. I didn't ask you some of these questions on social life for instance because you said that you were married when you came, and I thought maybe you were occupied with your husband rather than, you know what I mean.

DAVIS: Well, I was. Yes.

FARLEY: A lot of the groups gathered together in their own apartments and they had to make their own social life?

DAVIS: That's true. Well, I didn't do that. The group at Munitions building were very close group. It was mostly like a family group. When Ferdie Engle came, and I believe he came very shortly after I did, he stayed at a place right close called "Aldo's". Aldo and Maria have long since gone. Ferdie lived with them and that was a good place for parties and we had a

lot of parties. Abe Sinkov was great at entertaining. Then after Abe and Dee got married, they bought a boat and they lived on a houseboat.

FARLEY: I didn't know that.

DAVIS: You didn't know that. Oh, they lived in a houseboat down on the wharf. They tied up to somebody else's boat down there. They just bought this little boat. Abe had a big, no not big, --- a tin tub in it. It, looked like a bathtub but it was short. Abe used to stock that with lots of ice and beer and we'd go down there. Not very many people, you couldn't get more than about 6 in there at one time but, it was fun. And, then Kully had picnics in his backyard, he and Mina and the two kids. Oh the kids were wee little. Sally was only 2 or 3 years old, and Joe was maybe 6 or 7, something like that. It was a very congenial, very family group. I was a very lucky person that I happened to be there when I lost my husband, because these people gathered round like family and it made life really worth living and going on. But then after we went to Arlington Hall of course, the place expanded tremendously. But it was a great feeling of, and I don't know whether it's still here or not, of loyalty. Everybody, you all belong, we were all in this together, and everybody fought for everybody else. I suppose that's natural. Because Ann Caracristi came to work for me, or maybe not for me but we were in the same area. I can't remember, I don't know whether it was Frank Porter who was there at that point, I think. I was Frank's deputy and then Frank went to the China/Burma/India theater. Oh yes, I see --- looking at the picture --- here we go, here we are, right down here. Yes, this is where Annie was, right there.

FARLEY: In the address group.

DAVIS: Yes and Ann's still my little girl, I don't care if she's going to be in the oval room next Thursday or not. She's still my little girl. About three or four of us over there in that group bought a sailboat together one summer. We each kicked in oh, something like a hundred dollars or something. Rube Weiss, Glen Starling, and myself and I can't remember whether there was anybody else. The boat probably only cost \$300. But Annie used to go on it and she lived with three or four gals on Arlington Boulevard in an apartment house. I think I only got one ride on that boat really to tell you the truth. I'm not real sure but it only cost a hundred dollars.

FARLEY: Some investment.

DAVIS: Right, yes, but it was kind of fun. There used to be a Norfolk nightboat that went and that thing ran us down the only time I was ever on it. We would get becalmed and you couldn't get out of the way of the nightboat, and the nightboat would blow its horn. I think I did get one daytime ride on it too. I'm not sure.

FARLEY: So social life was not a problem really.

DAVIS: No, and, particular, well, you see after we got to Arlington Hall, we worked 24 hours a day. This is the thing that bothered me when I came back here, when I worked during the Vietnam war. I was so upset. I talked to a few people, and I don't guess I should tell you who they were, but I went up to the Director even, because he's a classmate of my husband's too. This is not the way you run the war. I've been through one before and you don't run a war like this. People were stuffing their stuff in their desks and going home at 4:00, 4:30. This is not it, I said, those guys over there don't quit at 4:30.

FARLEY: That's right.

DAVIS: And he said, "Just go back and sit down, don't rock the boat."

FARLEY: I can believe that.

DAVIS: I was so upset. He's another one that's in this book.

FARLEY: I know.

DAVIS: He speaks with very little knowledge, I believe. Now, a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, as we all know. That's what he had, I think. Never heard a shot fired in anger, so probably he didn't understand. Spent all World War II up in Alaska.

FARLEY: Nobody got shot up there.

DAVIS: When the ice cracked off, that's all. Be that as it may, there was, the camaraderie, the togetherness, the social life was no problem because, if you didn't work round the clock, there was somebody there. If you were running a business like that you were there on every shift or you tried to make at least two shifts every day. Part of two shifts one, the whole day shift, and part of one of the night shifts. You'd come in early in the morning and catch the night shift, and so, a 12 hour day was kind of more or less accepted, if you were running a problem. Because things just had to go on, that's all. That's the reason I was really pretty annoyed with this other setup because it never did get like that.

FARLEY: No, never.

DAVIS: We never had a feeling of any urgency.

FARLEY: Well, not like in 1941/42.

DAVIS: Never.

FARLEY: Did you move into pretty decent quarters when you moved over to Arlington Hall, from the Munitions building?

DAVIS: We moved into the Hall, we took over the Hall, the only thing that was there was just the main building.

FARLEY: That became the Headquarters Building.

DAVIS: That's why I said, there's nothing to go in and find the guys having a nap in the bathtub.

FARLEY: Did you stay with the Italian shop then? This is in, probably, April 42.

DAVIS: We moved right into the Japanese problem, because the Italians were part of the Axis of course. We were already into that, pretty well, and that problem continued, but I moved over to the Japanese problem almost immediately.

FARLEY: Was Frank Rowlett or Kullback in charge? Kullback was in charge of it?

DAVIS: Yes.

FARLEY: He's a fine fellow.

DAVIS: Yes real fine fellow, yes. Have you seen him very recently?

FARLEY: Not since his bypass, but I spent two days with him before, almost a week before.

DAVIS: Oh that's great. I haven't seen him in a while. I stopped on the way from Florida, this past spring I guess, when we came up from Florida, and spent couple of hours with he and his wife. And I was looking forward to seeing him and then, when we were away, we were in Alaska I guess, this summer, and when I came back he'd had this bypass.

FARLEY: Yes.

FARLEY: He's coming along.

DAVIS: He's doing all right no I guess, I checked with Midge Levinson yesterday and she said, everything was coming. I haven't talked with them at all.

FARLEY: I'll have to give him a call.



FARLEY: I'll have to give him a call.

DAVIS: I, too.

FARLEY: Did he call you in and say, "This is the way were going to reorganize or continue the current organization of the Japanese group?" Did he ask you where you wanted to move into, what sort of a task you would accept? Or did he just say, "Go there?"

DAVIS: I don't remember, I don't remember what happened. I really don't remember. I can't remember very much about that set up except that when we first got there we were all working in anybody's bedroom or anybody's office that you could get into. I remember we worked in a big room up on the 2nd floor of the building or the third floor of the building, and it was a lovely place to work, just like a country club, but it was crowded. Then we got A building and B building.

FARLEY: Did they have badges in those days, in early 42?

DAVIS: Yes.

FARLEY: Were you given a picture badge or given some identification to admit you into the building?

DAVIS: No, we had a badge, with our picture on it. Now, I don't know but, whether the one I've got at home, or I think I've got it up in the attic, it was a round badge about an inch and a half. It was red, and had your picture on it.

FARLEY: Color distinguished clearance?

DAVIS: Yes, the area you were supposed to be in.

FARLEY: Right. Do you remember whether you signed a security oath, and I'm thinking back maybe to 1937, or did they require one in 1942 after the war started?

DAVIS: You took an oath when you went to work. We always laughed about it because if you gave away any secrets it was ten years in jail or \$10,000 fine, and we'd all had ten years in jail because nobody could have ever found \$10,000. I don't know if it's still the same or not.

FARLEY: Probably is.

DAVIS: Probably is.

FARLEY: Did you get periodic security briefings?

DAVIS: Oh yes, security was very good really, and we were very impressed. People were very careful. We were only in cubbyholes at the Munitions Building, but I didn't go over into the German section. The German section didn't wander into our section. We went <sup>h</sup> where we belonged. We knew each other. We had lunch together and we saw each other in the halls. Of course, the doors were all open and there wasn't that much internal security. I guess if you had a seat you'd better sit on it, because somebody else would if you didn't. We were practically sitting in each other's laps anyway, after a while.

FARLEY: But there was a feeling that there was no need to find out what was going on across the hall or over the wall?

DAVIS: No, no, no. As a matter of fact you were so busy doing what you were doing, and there was so much to do. When you got to do it all from the time the stuff is pulled off. From the time the guy gets it off the earphones. It takes a long time to do it.

FARLEY: Did you get involved at all in the overlaps or laying out the messages?

DAVIS: Sure.

FARLEY: Or recovering the additives? You went through the whole routine with the Japanese problems?

DAVIS: Sure, well yes.

FARLEY: Was it much different from or more difficult than the Italian problem?  
Was there an adjustment necessary?

DAVIS: No, not really. See, I worked on the Japanese address problem, and it was across the board. They used the same enciphered address system in the Navy, the Army. Everybody used it. They had separate systems for their text, but they all used the same enciphered address system. It was an overlap system. It was an additive system as well, but it was divided up. If it was an odd length, it went into one book, and if it was an even it was done by another additive book, a different additive book. There were sets of books, zero to five. Oh, I can't, I don't really remember. I said if anybody got a hold of me and asked for anything, they could pull my tongue out, right out, and I'd never would be able to tell them anything. It's all clear, it's all in the open now anyway, I'm sure. But I ought to go back and read it and find out what I did.

FARLEY: Oh, it's interesting to read some of these books we do have in the Archives. It's enlightening.

DAVIS: Yes, I, would really be interested. Oh my gosh, there's Carl Elonquist, Paul Daffen looking at an old organization chart.

FARLEY: Yes, we thought you'd be interested in that organization chart. Do you recall old names?

DAVIS: Gee, yes, Dr. Catherter, Havier. Oh there's Herb Saidle. Now he was Kully's deputy, yes, yes. He was a good friend of mine. I had a card from Clayton, from Slip Swears yesterday. Yes.

FARLEY: What did he do?

DAVIS: Yes, he missed getting the first one out this year. Our first Christmas card I usually get from Slip Swears. He's been having a fine time, he got two big deer this, not long ago.

FARLEY: He's quite a hunter.

DAVIS: Oh Yes, he's been doing it all over. Have you talked to Frank Brugger? There's Nancy Coleman. Now she was one of Annie's roommate.

FARLEY: No, I had not talked to Frank Brugger. I talked to Frank Lewis, and did an interview with him when he was up here.

DAVIS: When was <sup>he</sup> here?

FARLEY: About 3 months ago.

DAVIS: Is that right.

FARLEY: He was attending the American Cryptologic Association convention in New Jersey.

DAVIS: Oh, I see.

FARLEY: Sat beside James Bamford, and gave him a rough time for writing the book.

DAVIS: Good, good.

FARLEY: PUZZLE PALACE

DAVIS: I'm glad to hear it. Gee, well, this is interesting. Is this book still TOP SECRET?

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: Oh, this is great. I enjoy this.

FARLEY: Why don't you look at it after lunch, its close to that time.

DAVIS: All right fine, well if you want to stop or if there's anything else.

FARLEY: We'd be delighted if you would come back.

DAVIS: I'll be happy to, but I don't want to bore you with all of this. I can go on talking about it forever.

FARLEY: Well wonderful, wonderful. It's not boring

DAVIS: I can tell you about my relocation to Washington, D.C. It wasn't a very difficult adjustment, not very difficult.

FARLEY: And you talked pretty much about the rest of it, who you reported to, we talked about the oaths and the type of training.

DAVIS: Yes, I probably did.

FARLEY: Well, we can get into some of the specifics on your problems and your organizations.

DAVIS: I won't be able to tell you any specifics. I really won't.

FARLEY: Want to talk any friction between Military and Civilian, the WACs, and the girls who were not in uniform?

DAVIS: Well, I had WACs working for me and we never had any problems. Now, I never worked for one, and I wanted to go into the WACs at one time. I asked Carl Spenson, and this is after my husband died and we were still down in the <sup>Munitions Bldg</sup> Pentagon. The WACs had been the starters and Ovita Culp Hobby I think was the head of it. I talked to Spenson and I said, "You know, this might be a good thing for me to do" He said, "You just sit right where you're sitting. You'll help this war effort a lot more where you are than in some mud flat down in Louisiana. That's probably where you'd end up, down there running a bunch of women through the mud. It's silly."

FARLEY: That's right.

DAVIS: He and Dink Hayes. I talked to both them. They both said, "Stay right where you are. You couldn't be in a better place. We need you right here. They don't need you, they got plenty of other girls that can slough through." But we had some nice WACs, and some very intelligent ones. I never had any problem as far as that was concerned. I never felt any real,

well maybe there's something wrong with me. I really never felt threatened. Well it was kind of home, you know. You always felt you could always come back again and I did as a matter of fact. This happened to me and it's interesting. My second husband, John Manson went to Canada and he died. We were married in the fall of 49 and he died in the summer of 52. We were visiting with my sister in Erie, Pennsylvania when he died. I just didn't know what I was going to do. After a few days after the funeral was over and everything I talked to my sister. I had to go back to Canada and get my apartment straightened out and so forth. I said, "Helen, what am I going to do?" She said, "Well you silly thing, what are you going to do?" She said, "You have a telegram from Mr. Friedman. You know what you're going to do. You're going up there and get rid of that apartment and put your furniture in storage, and get yourself back down to Washington." It was simple as that.

FARLEY: It worked out beautifully.

DAVIS: Yes. I got here and, I had been working at that time for Ollie Kirby before. I was in charge of the Russian Diplomatic problem. That was after the war of course. It was 1949. And, I'd been working for Ollie and Captain Kirby. I think he was Captain Kirby. I arrived in Washington, and several people took care of me. Marion Jenkins was one of them and so forth. We'd been friends. Marion worked for me before, over in the China problem, before I left. Anyway Ollie called me. As soon as I got an apartment he got my phone number and he called me and said, "When you coming to work?" I said, "What do you mean?" I didn't know. I knew I was going back. And he said, "Your desk's sitting there, the chair is empty." He said, "I've already talked to"--whoever

took my job when I left. A good Irish name and I'm trying to think of it. Jim Leahy. He said, "Jim agrees you go right back in that seat." So I got my job back. It was just like I'd never left home.

FARLEY: Wonderful.

DAVIS: Isn't that marvelous?

FARLEY: It's something about the Agency.

DAVIS: Well this is what I said. It's just been like a mother hen to me.

FARLEY: Cutting into your time so why don't we knock it off.

DAVIS: Ok. fine. Oh, this is my pleasure, my pleasure, and I'm glad to come back.

FARLEY: Shall we take it up again. Do you recall at all anything about the organizational structure of SIS when you moved into it, other than the Japanese section and the Italian section, and the German section? Were there any organized groups in there, shall I say?

DAVIS: No, see it was a very small organization and the front office was Mr. Friedman and Colonel Akin, S. B. Akin. That was the front office, and the secretary, who, I do remember but can't, and there was Louise.

FARLEY: Parther?

DAVIS: Louise Parther was there and she worked between the front office and John Hurt and Mr. Rowlett. Mr. Rowlett had the Japanese problem. I think Mr. Rowlett and Mr. Friedman, were both, I know working on Purple.

FARLEY: Louise Beall. Does that name mean anything to you?

DAVIS: Louise Beall?

FARLEY: She was a junior clerk I think, she called herself.

DAVIS: Louise Bell. Was she Ray Bell's wife? Is that who were talking about?

FARLEY: No, no. No that's a different Bell.

DAVIS: Oh

FARLEY: B E A L L, pronounced "Bell".

DAVIS: Well, we had Beall's like that back home, but I don't know her.

FARLEY: I interviewed her some time ago but she didn't remember very much.

DAVIS: I don't remember her, so, I really don't. The organization was the Italian section, the German section, a Spanish section. Frank Bearce had a fellow named Arnoldo Beringer who was Hispanic. There were only about 3, 4, people in that. When I say these sections, there weren't more than about 3 or 4 people in any of them when I first arrived. Then as I said we had that big influx of the Hisers and those people. I think maybe when left the Munitions building, we probably had not more than 8 or 10 people working on the Italian problem, and I don't think many more on the German. The German problem grew of course, after it got over to Arlington Hall. They got into the Floradora system, and things like that. It grew a lot, like mad. We only had the back half of a wing in the Munitions building. I can remember the Colonel, Mr. Friedman, and Frank Rowlett, and sort of the machine room, and a few things on that side, and then over here was the Italian section and the German section. John Hurt was in the back, back there with all his books and things, the Japanese translators, and that was about it. And the Navy was in the next wing over. All you had to do was go across a cat walk and there was the Navy. We didn't really, as far as I'm concerned, we weren't working together, but I can't think of any antagonism, particularly.

FARLEY: That's what I was going to ask -- were there any instructions that you wouldn't associate?



DAVIS: No no, none at all. Now there may have been on a higher level, because I was as far down as you could get down. And the people upstairs there, I mean the Friedmans, and the people like Rowlett, and Sinkov and so forth may have been going back and forth with the Navy, but I never felt any antagonism. Then when we got to Arlington Hall, that was such a big move, and such a mish-mash, and we moved from the big building over to the other building. I can't remember anything about it except that. A Building and certain things and B Building had certain things. A Building always seemed to me like it wasn't very important.

FARLEY: I feel the same way.

DAVIS: Because I was in B Building, I guess that was why.

FARLEY: I feel the same way.

DAVIS: That was where Ralph Cooke and the other guy were. I can't think of his name. Another Colonel was over there and their gang were over in A Building. Of course the Kullbacks and the Sinkovs and I think Mr. Rowlett was in A Building.

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: Then some of the Navy moved over to work with us, I think before even AFSA started.

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: I can remember having Navy people in my shop in the Chinese problem, I was talking to you about, I think, even before we were AFSA.

FARLEY: Were there any second thoughts?

DAVIS: I mean, maybe it was AFSA? But it couldn't have been.

FARLEY: No, no.

DAVIS: No, it wasn't NSA, I know that.

FARLEY: It wasn't, yes, AFSA was--.

DAVIS: I was not here when AFSA was formed.

FARLEY: AFSA was formed in '52, I believe.

DAVIS: See I left in late 49.

FARLEY: With your move from Munitions to Arlington Hall, were you aware of an increasing Military influence on the organization or was that apparent?

DAVIS: Oh yes, because everybody went into uniform. And also, S. B. Akin was the only military. Well we had those two Colonels who were always in, but they didn't wear their uniforms. I'm not really sure because they were regular Army. They may have worn the uniform. But I think only, three men as we said Hayes, Sherr, and Frank Bearce were in. He wasn't in uniform. He was, I think, a reserve officer, maybe. Even Rowlett, Sinkov and Kullback were not in uniform. They didn't go in the uniform until after we got over to Arlington Hall. But there was an increase, because, that's when things changed. I think the military had more to do with it because we got into the war time situation.

FARLEY: How did this affect Mr. Friedman's position? Were you aware that he...?

DAVIS: Yes, yes, I think it bothered him a good deal, because that's when Uncle Billy was just a Lieutenant Colonel. I don't mean just, but I mean, that I think he felt this fairly keenly. I don't think he was ever downgraded. He had a nervous breakdown, he was in Walter Reed for some little bit of time there.

FARLEY: When did that happen, do you remember?

DAVIS: That was after we were at Arlington.

FARLEY: Was it? Was it in 1942, in the early days of the war?

DAVIS: I think it was.

FARLEY: Well, he did come back, didn't he?

DAVIS: Yes, he came back, but, not really. He never really came back.

FARLEY: That's what I wanted you to say.

DAVIS: He never really came back. He came back but he was no longer the same man.

FARLEY: And his presence was not felt.

DAVIS: Not felt at all. Well, I won't say not at all, but I don't think he was the Grand Old Man in cryptanalysis at that point and I don't believe his influence was nearly as strong, say as Brigadier Tiltman's still was in England. Of course, the Brigadier was younger than he, I'm sure. I think. And, but Mr. Friedman, was, he was kind of "Over-the-Hill Charlie."

FARLEY: When you took over the Address section, was there anything prior to that that we should talk about, or that you would like recorded before we go into detail on something else?

DAVIS: I can't go into very much detail. Not really. I can't remember really, after we got over to Arlington Hall, up to that point. I must have started pretty early on because I can remember working with Frank Porter. Did you ever know Frank Porter?

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: I worked with Frank even in the Headquarters Building. When we expanded, they were all in there together, Frank Lewis, Frank Porter. I mean the whole mish-mash was all in the big room sort of business. I worked with Frank and then we moved over into B Building. When Frank moved off to the CBI, I took over the problem and from then on through the war. I just don't have any recollections really of working on anything else, very much after I got over there. That was it.

FARLEY: Ok, that's great. Would you run through the work procedures? I'm not interested in the technical details. What did the people do? What was an example eight - hour day for an individual who might be sitting at a desk in the address section? They'd received traffic and they'd do this and they'd do that. Could you recall what the sequence of events might be for an analyst?

DAVIS: Yes, well for an analyst but we had it broken down. The traffic came in raw, and somebody had to log it in. We had a logging section. Mary Elizabeth Brash, she was at the party the other night. Liz Brash, and she's not Liz Brash any longer, but she was at that Phoenix thing. I hadn't seen her in years.

FARLEY: Neither had I.

DAVIS: She was in charge of my logging, my traffic section, and they got all the traffic. It was all logged, and if we knew what the indicator was, the indicator was underlined. It was logged in a "from" and "to," in a date time sequence kind of way, and then edited to a certain amount and then it was sent to the punch room. We'd gotten "Red," "Red," not "Red" Lott. What was his name?

FARLEY: Not Luckenbach?

DAVIS: No, I know "Red" Luckenbach, no it wasn't Red Luckenbach. He was an IBM man, and he was in charge. Al Highly was down there too. I can't remember "Red's" last name. We would get the traffic, and it would go from this traffic section downstairs and this would all be punched. Then it was worked in periods, and you could know when the additive changed. It would change, maybe monthly or something like that and so we'd try to accumulate it all. But in the meantime, if it could be read it went to an analyst, where they would, put it on their overlaps, and take off the key. Then they would

shoot it right over to probably to Ferdie Engle, or, who was in charge or Dr. Silver. I don't know who all. I had a whole bunch of linguists in there and they would make up a black book every night for the Chief of Staff or for the Pentagon. It wasn't the Chief of Staff. But it went to ACSI I'm pretty sure, something like that. And Ferdie's job was to take that over there. He was there at 5:00 every morning for the black book session.

FARLEY: And these were translations, completed translations?

DAVIS: And these were completed. We tried to do it on a daily basis, but this took a little while of course. I mean we didn't do it the first day we were in business, but we had this thing on a very timely basis. As a matter of fact I think one of our biggest achievements was shooting that Admiral out of the air.

FARLEY: Yamamoto.

DAVIS: Yes, because we knew it. We got it from an address. It was a certain address and it was a message for him. We knew he was on this plane, and he was going to some place and they shot him down. And so we felt that was a very great achievement. I don't know whether killing somebody is such a good thing.

FARLEY: No, no it isn't. You know, that's a story that I hear all the time. And then I come back after World War II and I found out that the Navy did all of that.

DAVIS: No, they didn't.

FARLEY: And I said, "Gee, maybe I'm crazy."

DAVIS: The Navy didn't even have an address, actually, as far as I know. I think the Navy took a lot of credit, and that's why I was kind of unhappy.

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: I'm sorry, I couldn't help it, but you know it's really true. As a matter of fact, the Navy came over, I guess that was after the war, the Navy sent people over to work with us from Nebraska Avenue. That was when I was running that Chinese problem, I told you about.

FARLEY: And that was after the war.

DAVIS: And that was after the war. But we did not have anything much to do. Maybe the Navy did it, but I don't think so. I know that we were going great guns, and you can believe it. Annie was my chief cryptanalyst practically. There were two or three people of her ilk, at least, Annie Solomon, and Hap Hazzard, who's not. Hap was there and well there was Charlie Condrey. Let's see, did Charlie work for me? Not on that problem? No. He wasn't there yet. But we had a lot of really fine people and very dedicated people. And nobody was doing anything else. Their work was the focal point of their life. And everybody was in it tooth and nail and you didn't ever have to worry about asking anybody to work overtime. There wasn't any such a thing as overtime. I mean, you worked until you were done. I said we worked 24 hour shifts. We had, I thought, very good relationships. I think there were a couple hundred people in this area. I had a meeting at least once a week, and would have a report from everybody that was in charge of any section, the traffic section, and the cryptanalysts, and then the linguists. So that everybody knew what everybody else was doing. There was just great rapport back and forth. I think we also kept very closely in touch with their personal--- that's not what I mean. I don't mean their personal live, but when Annie had the measles I went to see her. She didn't have the measles, she had chicken pox, worst of all.

FARLEY: Let me switch to another tape I want to hear all of this at once.

(END OF TAPE II, SIDE B)

FARLEY: Do you remember anything more about Ann Caracristi?

DAVIS: Yes, I do. She arrived, she was a very blond, blue-eyed, sort of pudgy little girl. A big girl, she was. We're the same size, same type. She had on bobby socks, and flat shoes, and a swinging skirt, full of pleats, and a sweater. She wore a pullover a lot of the time. Her hair, which is naturally curly, was all over her head. I, always, don't tell Annie this, I always thought she must have washed it with "Fels Naphta" -- a laundry soap.

FARLEY: Is that so?

DAVIS: Anyway, I think she did as a matter of fact. I think Curt told me that. Anyway she was just a bobby soxer. That's exactly what she was. She was also an English major, and when she sat down and started to work, it was just obvious to me she had an engineer's mind, and she does. It was the most-fascinating thing. I don't know how long, she may have been there a year, maybe it was a year, maybe it was two. I got a call one morning and this little voice said, "I won't be in today, I've got the chicken pox." And I just laughed, I couldn't help it. I thought, well, gee, there are times we don't have anybody with chicken pox.

FARLEY: Especially over 18.

DAVIS: She was probably 22, at least. She came in 1942, she was 21 when she came. It's been interesting to watch her develop through the years, and how wonderful.

FARLEY: There was really no morale problem with your people?

- DAVIS: No morale problem. The thing maybe there was so much morale, you couldn't get anybody to stop. Oh no, there was no morale problem at all. And I never found any jealousy or anything. Everybody was in there pitching and anything that anybody could do, they'd do it. I mean, I've seen linguists go over and sit down and help with the logging, and things like that because, they wanted to get it done. It was important to get that done, before anybody could do anything else. No, there was no morale problem, never, and of course, there was no problem about salaries or anything.
- FARLEY: I was going to ask you--Did you ever hear anyone gripe because they were not being promoted?
- DAVIS: No, no, never, of course promotions were few and as it says in that old song.
- FARLEY: "This side of the ocean." Right.
- DAVIS: Yes, and I think through all of this I went from \$1620 to \$2000.
- FARLEY: Ok.
- DAVIS: And, I left ten years later and I'd had a 380 dollar raise. Isn't that good?
- FARLEY: That is something.
- DAVIS: No, maybe I'd had. I'd gotten to a P2, which was \$2600. I'd gotten to \$2600.
- FARLEY: Well, that's not much of an increase.
- DAVIS: No. That's \$920. When I first came to work that's what Kully and Abe were making in 1939. They were P2's making 2600 dollars a year. So, I shouldn't have had anything more than 1620. There was no morale problem at all, none.
- FARLEY: Was there any problem with eager young Lieutenants, pulling their rank, sort of lording it over some of the civilian people?



DAVIS: No, no, I didn't see any of it.

FARLEY: How about the WACs versus the civilians?

DAVIS: Maybe I was oblivious to all these things, but I never saw any problems at all. In the first place we didn't have that many WACs, and in the second place, I thought the WACs got the stinkiest jobs that there were to have. They gave them awful jobs. Now I did have a WAC that was a reader. She was an overlap reader. I saw an awful lot of them that got shoved into doing security duty and things like that. You know sitting at the doors. However, we used civilians for that too. I had a gal from South Carolina who sat at my door all the time. I never forgot, once General Canine came in during an off shift, an evening shift or something. He came to the door and she said, "Stop!" She didn't know him, and he said, "I'm General Canine," and she said, "I don't care if you're a Colonel, you can't come in here." He never got over that!

FARLEY: That's great. Wonderful.

DAVIS: That was about as much rank as she knew though. No there wasn't really, now there might have been. I worked very closely with the traffic analysis section, extremely closely. As a matter of fact, they used to come over and steal our papers, because if they could find out what the addresses were they could do traffic analysis a lot better.

FARLEY: Oh, yes.

DAVIS: Sure.

FARLEY: What were they "hatsus" and "chiyas"?

DAVIS: "Hatsu" and "Chiyas," that's right, "to's" and "from's."

FARLEY: Right, "to's" and "from's."

DAVIS: And the "ate."

FARLEY: "Ate," yes.

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DAVIS: "Ate" -- that's an address.

FARLEY: A question on the address group itself, in the Japanese address, was that enciphered? Was there an additive applied?

DAVIS: Yes, that's, that was the thing that was enciphered.

FARLEY: It was?

DAVIS: It was at the top of the message. It wasn't in the message. It was just like you'd write, "Chief of Staff, U.S. Army," and that's what some of them said, "San Boochoo." It was this kind of thing right across -- whatever it was -- 82nd Division or whatever. You see, what we were doing was establishing Order of Battle and that was the big deal. That was what this group was that Ferdie Engle had together. Ferdie was an Italian translator, but he learned himself some Japanese. And it wasn't hard to translate, just five or seven groups or something like that. There were some people in there that did know Japanese, but, they didn't need to know very much in order to do that. But what they did need to know was Order of Battle and that's really what they were building was Japanese Order of Battle. That was the real reason for reading all these addresses. And the fact that they were all enciphered, the whole military, naval thing was all enciphered by the same keys, made it a tremendous job because that meant that every bit of Japanese traffic had an address on it. So you couldn't just have, "the air," and "the Navy" or something like that, and put them in different piles they were all together so we had to see all the traffic. I think that's one of the things that made it so much fun.

FARLEY: I didn't realize that you saw everything.

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DAVIS: We saw everything, everything had to come through us, because it had to. I don't know if we got it first, but we got a copy. I suppose there were four or five copies, and we just got a copy. I'm sure the water section, Len Seidenglantz and some of those people got their copy too. I remember the day that we had a very heavy snow and the buses didn't run and nothing else ran, everybody came to work. They walked. I walked from (?Canal or Cornell Ridge?) to Arlington Hall. I don't know if you know how far that is or not.

FARLEY: It's a long walk.

DAVIS: It was a long walk. But we all walked. We got there, some way. You couldn't get your car out of the driveway. I had a car, I was a big favorite because I had a car.

FARLEY: Did you get your ration coupons for gasoline and how many coupons every month?

DAVIS: Yes, I did, yes I did. And people would save coupons and Annie and Gert would save their coupons and then we would go up to the mountains, and have a weekend or something, or a day or an evening, whatever. I think the smallness of the organization and the urgency of the mission made such a difference. The urgency of the mission is still there. The organization is very, very large. And I suppose it couldn't possibly be done, it's just a different, it's a completely different organization now than it was then.

FARLEY: The dedication is gone though.

DAVIS: Not entirely, do you think?

FARLEY: I hope not. Because we have to rely on these people.

DAVIS: I don't think it can be. I still feel, you'll think I'm a war monger but there's nothing like a war to get us back together again. I hope that it doesn't happen, and it didn't happen in Vietnam. We never got together on

that one. I was not here for the Korean war, so I don't know how that one went. I was in Canada during that period. I'm going to find out if one of the things I've been saying came true. I've said about this younger generation. There's nothing wrong with the United States that a good depression won't cure. And, I think it may.

FARLEY: Yes, it's coming.

DAVIS: I think it may. Well, you know I don't think it'll hurt anything. I think that people have to realize that everything is not going to get handed to them. It's going to be awful hard to retrench. And I think the same thing will be hard here.

FARLEY: We went through the depression, and we understood the value of a nickel and dime.

DAVIS: Yes, yes. I don't know.

FARLEY: Kids nowadays don't.

DAVIS: I know they don't and I wonder if it can happen again, and that why I wonder if the same dedication can get back here.

FARLEY: I hope so.

DAVIS: I hope so, I don't see how we can survive if it doesn't. And I do believe that when the chips are down, that people are still basically as dedicated as they ever were. I think, everybody's going to --- in fact it's your own skin, you had better get in there and be dedicated.

FARLEY: That's a frightening part of it, isn't it?

DAVIS: Yes.

FARLEY: When you were in your address section, did you have any Britishers, or Australians, or New Zealanders.

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DAVIS: We had worked very closely with a man name Pat Marr-Johnson, a Colonel MARR - JOHNSON, who is now down in the Caymans. I have corresponded with him now and again, and I have seen him in the last, oh five years I guess. He was out, he was in New Delhi. And they were working on the address problem out there at the same time. We had a kind of liaison. We did liaison with New Delhi. I mean we didn't send anybody back and forth but we messaged.

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: They sent us some very good things from a couple of planes that were shot down. We had the best files. They had the plain text messages, and we were able to go into our files and find the enciphered messages, which helped us a great deal.

FARLEY: Wonderful.

DAVIS: Yes, and, that kind of thing helped out a lot. That was the CBI theater of course, New Delhi. That's where Frank Porter went when he left us.

FARLEY: What about Australia, Central Bureau?

DAVIS: And CB yes, we worked with CB. I don't mean CB, that was Canada CBNRC.

FARLEY: Oh, I was thinking Central Bureau, Australia.

DAVIS: Central Bureau, Australia, we worked with them, but we worked very close with Ed Drake and the CBNRC.

FARLEY: In Canada?

DAVIS: Yes. Now they did not have an address section but they would furnish us anything they got. They liaised with us on anything. The Canadians were into it. Now they didn't have nearly the organization they've got now. I think they've got a much bigger and better organization now. Because, it was kind of like we were. We weren't very big before World War II.

FARLEY: I didn't understand that we worked that closely with the Canadians.

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DAVIS: Yes we did.

FARLEY: That's interesting.

DAVIS: You see, both Kevin O'Neill and John Manson went to Canada from here and they both had been sent over to help us. When were they sent over here? After World War II, I guess. No they were sent over here, well, it must have been toward the end or something because I remember. All right, I don't remember when they came over here. 1946, I think it was after---

FARLEY: It was after?

DAVIS: It was after World War II, yes.

FARLEY: Ok. But during number two, we did exchange address groups with the Canadians?

DAVIS: Yes, we had liaison with the Canadians. Now, they weren't doing very much I can tell you now that they weren't doing very much. We were doing the most of anybody. There wasn't anybody else, really, doing very much on it. We had the most going. And, as I say, Pat Marr-Johnson was working. Pat is a very good cryptanalyst and he was working down in Delhi. England was not working on it at all. They were concentrating heavily on the German problem. They didn't work on this a little bit, Japanese thing.

FARLEY: Ok. Did you hear the word ULTRA during the early days of World War II, 43, 44?

DAVIS: Uh, uh.

FARLEY: Did the word ULTRA ever appear or did you ever see it stamped on anything.

DAVIS: No.

FARLEY: I didn't either. That is why I asked.

DAVIS: No, it wasn't there. No, we had TOP SECRET CREAM. There were different code words. ULTRA didn't come along for a long time. ULTRA I would say, came along in the 50's.

FARLEY: Well there was an ULTRA during World War II.

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DAVIS: There was an ULTRA during World War II, but it wasn't TOP SECRET ULTRA.

FARLEY: No.

DAVIS: We had TOP SECRET. We had several, do you remember CREAM?

FARLEY: I remember CREAM yes, CANOE. I don't remember others.

DAVIS: Well CANOE had to do with call signs, I think. Then there were all those other things that the traffic analysis people had. Birds I think, Bird names.

FARLEY: Remember when material was stamped, was it TOP SECRET. The raw material that came into your section wasn't stamped up was it? Remember?

DAVIS: I don't remember.

FARLEY: I don't.

DAVIS: Well, it wasn't no. Not until it was read. It might have SECRET on it. No, it didn't have anything on it. The stuff that came in, well we didn't get any of that kind of stuff, during the war. We didn't get any of that from, of course, from the Postal. You know what I'm talking about.

FARLEY: Western Union.

DAVIS: Western Union. We got, that work when I was working on the Russian Diplomatic problem. That was just marvelous traffic. Oh wow!

FARLEY: When was that, after the war?

DAVIS: That was after the war, yes. We got it came right out of the Western Union office, right here in Washington.

FARLEY: Were we working on the Russian problem during World War II?

DAVIS: A small, effort. I think Carrie Berry could tell you about that.

FARLEY: Yes. I want to talk to her.

DAVIS: Yes, I think Carrie Berry was on that, I believe. She had started that end of that. And I'm not real sure, but I think that's where she was and I think that was under Mr. Rowlett, I believe.

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FARLEY: In your section, did...?

DAVIS: Now, wait a minute, Yes, I think Rowlett kind of got that group.

FARLEY: Yes, he did. I guess it was Colonel Kullback by that time by -- 1943?

DAVIS: Oh, yes.

FARLEY: Did he wander around and look over the shoulders of the various analysts, pat them on the back, and say, "You're doing a good job." What I'm trying to find out, did you get any complimentary feedback, from anyone, about whether you were doing a good job?

DAVIS: No. Not that I know of.

FARLEY: But you were determined to keep going anyway?

DAVIS: Well no, you really didn't expect anything like that. Everybody had so much to do. I'll never forget Kully, and Annie probably told you this too. This was when the address system had all been one system. I mean, and then all of a sudden something happened to it, and we were in awful pickle, because it was war. I know they had been getting such beautiful order of battle, and all of sudden, just like that, it was wiped out. And so we had to do something about it. It became evident that there was something different going on between a four group message and a five group message, or a three group message and a two group address. We thought we were getting someplace with the 2's and the 4's and the 6's and we were really going strong on this. Kully came back and said to me, "Would you gather up all the even group messages and bring them up to my office." He said, "I'll take of the evens, you take care of the odds." And so he took all the evens. We were just about to crack up. Annie and I just ran, it was so funny. That became kind of a little catch phrase for a long time, "You take care of the odds, I'll take care of the evens."



DAVIS: We were just about ready to read the evens, and he said, "I'll take care of the evens and you take care of the odds." I think he knew what he was doing, because he had another job, he was running the whole shop. He thought, "Well, I'll do this and let them get on with what is not being done." And that was perfectly all right but it was kind of fun. I think it was a very valuable. It didn't tell you anything about what was in the body of the message, but it sure kept track of the units, they were moving too, and who was going where, when. I can't help but feel that it helped, and if you think you're doing something that's helping, nobody has to pat you on the back.

FARLEY: Yes, yes that's right. That is so true. Do you think that the women with superior talent, like yourself for instance...

DAVIS: Oh honey, I don't have, but thanks a lot.

FARLEY: Got a fair shake, got a fair shake? Do you know what I'm saying?

DAVIS: Yes, I do.

FARLEY: A good manager was given a managerial position?

DAVIS: Well, you can have only so many managers. There have to be lots of Indians. You can only have so many chiefs. Everybody was very new at this game, you see, and my capabilities compared with Ann's were nothing. But Ann came in three years after I did and three years was a lot of time that. If Ann would have come in three years before I did, she certainly would have had that job and maybe Kullback's, I don't know. You noticed Deliah Sinkov is on that roster. Deliah was a very bright gal. I never felt that girls were particularly held back. No, not at all. As a matter of fact, I think NSA has been rather good to its female compatriots. I've never had any quarrel with it. Now Jane Brewer probably wouldn't agree with me. As a matter of fact she's given me a few good groups about that.

She tried to get me involved in this NOW thing. And I said, "Jane, I'm sorry." When it first started, I said, "I don't want any part of this. I just don't want to go on with this." And she said, "Well, you got yours, you don't care whether anybody else gets theirs or not, do you?"

FARLEY: Cruel!

DAVIS: I said, "I don't see how you can say that at all. I've done everything I could for anybody that's ever worked for me." And I said, "I don't see how you can say that." I just left her standing. I was so mad, I could kill.

FARLEY: Yes, that was a cruel thing to say.

DAVIS: Yes, it was kind of nasty I thought. I'm not a women's liber. I'm not a women's liber.

FARLEY: Good, good.

DAVIS: I am not. I believe that were all made a little differently, with different roles to play, and I'm not against women working. I think somebody like Annie who's chosen to be a businesswoman all her life deserves everything she's gotten and I'm delighted she's gotten it. I don't think she was held back. Juanita wasn't held back. I think there are an awful lot of women in this organization. I think if they've got it and they want to put it, but you have to put first things first. A man puts his job almost first, and that's what you have to do, but if that's what you want to be, if that's what you want to excel in.

FARLEY: That's right.

DAVIS: You can't put your home and family first and say, well I'll do that job when I get around to it. No way.

FARLEY: No way you can.

DAVIS: No.

FARLEY: That's it.

DAVIS: And, so, I don't think NSA's been bad to women at all.

FARLEY: Its interesting to hear you say that. I'm glad to have that on tape.

DAVIS: Oh, I forgot what I was doing. Now I do think that up to the time that General Canine picked those gals up to be super grades there weren't any female supers. He picked up the three, and I do think they played that one to the hilt. That's for sure. It was kind of interesting.

FARLEY: Well were getting close to when you want to leave.

DAVIS: That's all right, I don't care, I don't mind.

FARLEY: I just have a few more questions.

DAVIS: Well I, let's go ahead. I don't mind. I've gone through this traffic for 18 years. I don't mind traffic at all.

FARLEY: Ok, I should save this question for later. What was the most personally satisfying accomplishment or achievement during your tour at Arlington Hall, during the World War II period? I know this is difficult to select any outstanding example but what was the most satisfying thing that you did? The address group, the Yamamoto bit, or just a little bit of everything maybe.

DAVIS: Everyday. There wasn't anything that I---, the Yamamoto bit was great. I remember when they sent that stuff in from that crashed plane out in India. I sort of remembered having seen something in that file and I went back to the file and I found it. And I remember Al Small and I was working on it. I found what I thought looked like ought to be that, the same thing. I had it on my desk and I just wasn't positive, and Al Small came back and was looking over my shoulder. Remember Al?

FARLEY: Big Al.

DAVIS: Great big, heavy set, and he stood there a while and said, "Wilma, what are you doing?" And I showed him what I was doing and he stood and looked and looked at it and he said, "You've got it." He said, "That's it, That's it." I said, "I'm afraid I'm forcing it. I'm pushing too hard. I want it to work." He said "No, that's it. You've got it." And it was the message. The address was there so from the address I'd been able to put the two things together. That meant that whoever had the other message, it was Rowlett or ---? He had one message in plain text and one message enciphered.

FARLEY: Great.

DAVIS: It wasn't one, it was a whole sheaf of them, and so I just handed them over. It was through the addresses that we were able to push this into some other section. And they were able to read it or get into a new batch of traffic.

FARLEY: Right. How useful was collateral?

DAVIS: How useful was collateral?

FARLEY: Did it help you at all, help any of your analysts?

DAVIS: Oh yes, I think collateral was always valuable but we didn't have that much collateral during World War II. We just didn't have that much. Now, when we were working on the Italian problem, and when we were working on the diplomatic problem you can pick stuff right up out of the newspaper and fit it in sometimes. Somebody's speech or something like that is being sent on the wire. That's great, but, it didn't prove to be true unless somebody captured something. If they captured something, then that was great, even if it was just, Order of Battle, or whatever. I can't remember very much collateral.

FARLEY: I don't either.

DAVIS: I don't either. No, I don't. I don't know whether anybody else would or not. Annie might, I don't think so, I don't remember very much.

FARLEY: Excuse me, I'm sorry, you were going to say...

DAVIS: No. I think that we got reports from the ACSI office, and we got reports from various intelligence sources, but as far as having anything that you could just crib in, it was few and far between. It didn't help very much. There just wasn't anything.

FARLEY: Did you have any desire to do any other job like linguist or reporter?

FARLEY: But you had no desire to do anything else other than address group reporting?

DAVIS: Oh no, I was perfectly willing, but I like what I was doing. I had a great bunch of people and it was a growing concern and it stayed a growing concern. As long as we were in war I never thought about doing anything else. This was much more interesting to me. I mean you had cryptanalysis, you had traffic analysis, and you had order of battle, and you could hardly ask for a better job. You were sitting right on top of the world and you were following the Japs all over "Hell's half acre," all the time. You weren't just reading something about, "Send me three pounds of sugar and ten pounds of rice," or something like that. I thought it was the most exciting job in the place and I just wouldn't have had any other job. That's all.

FARLEY: The big one was the water transport code, wasn't it? The Japanese?

DAVIS: The Naval code, yes, of course, and when you've got a Navy in the Pacific you've got a big one.

FARLEY: I see.

DAVIS: You got a lot of water going for you, yes.

FARLEY: Absolutely.

DAVIS: Yes. And they did very well on it, I think.

FARLEY: Is there anything else we should talk about during World War II? I'd like to sort of take it up to the end of the war and then maybe talk a little about the Chinese, your Chinese section, and then, whatever else you want to mention. You just continued with the address section.

DAVIS: Yes, I went on until it was all over, until we finally wrapped it up and put it away. That was it. And that's literally what we did, just wrapped it up and put it away.

FARLEY: Did everything just stop?

DAVIS: Everything just stopped. Nothing. It was all over.

FARLEY: Did anybody ever write a history of the address section?

DAVIS: No, I don't think so.

FARLEY: Other than, this one we have here.

DAVIS: I don't think so. I'd like to read that one sometime.

FARLEY: Any time. You're welcome to do so.

DAVIS: Can I come out and read it some time?

FARLEY: Absolutely, anytime you want.

DAVIS: That's one thing I don't like to do. I hate to write.

FARLEY: Really.

DAVIS: And Annie likes to write. Oh, I'd love to read this. I wonder who did this?

FARLEY: I don't know.

DAVIS: Well, anyway, no I can't really, think of, anything more that went on during this period.

FARLEY: Did you think about, after the end of the war that maybe this was not the career for you?

DAVIS: Heavens no!!

FARLEY: You thought you might like to do something else?

DAVIS: No Way! No. I didn't know how I was ever so lucky to get in this. You know, it was just a luckiest day in my life when he, Mr. Friedman ----.

FARLEY: Was it quite a let down after the war when a lot of the people were going home and people going back to their old jobs?

DAVIS: Yes, and General Corderman came out and got everybody together and gave a speech. That's when Annie left, you know. He gave this speech, and he said, "Thank you very much. You can all go home now!"

FARLEY: That's what she mentioned.

DAVIS: Yes, I, yes. I'll never forget it.

FARLEY: She called it something, "Goodbye and farewell," or something like that.

DAVIS: "Thanks a lot but it's been nice to know you," and that kind of bit. A lot of people went, and I didn't go because I'd been there before World War II and I didn't feel like he was talking to me.

FARLEY: Yes, that's right, that's right.

DAVIS: I saw Red. Oh, he was here for something. Oh, for Mr. Rowlett's speech

FARLEY: Right.

DAVIS: No, it never, it would never have occurred to me to do anything else. I was so lucky to get into this that I wouldn't have changed it for anything. I can't think of a profession that could be this interesting.

FARLEY: No. It's very satisfying.

DAVIS: Very satisfying and I'd sell it to anybody that had any kind of a bent in this direction. Now there are some people that might just hate it. I don't know how they could, because there's so many aspects of it. If you don't fit in one corner you can fit in another one, or in a niche. There's just so many, many different ways to go. There's so much opportunity to

develop yourself, as well as your problem and everything else. It's just, I think, a terrific, terrific work, and maybe it's unethical but I like it.

FARLEY: That's right. After, well let's say, in early 46, a few months after the war, was there a major readjustment necessary, and I'm thinking of targeting?

DAVIS: Oh sure.

FARLEY: Intelligence targeting, and reorganizing. Was this quite a difficult time for ASA or whatever it became then. ASA or whatever it became, ASA, it would be ASA or AFSA.

DAVIS: When did we become AFSA?

FARLEY: No, now wait a minute. 1946, it was ASA.

DAVIS: It was ASA.

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: And, then it became AFSA in about 1949 didn't it?

FARLEY: 51.

DAVIS: 51? Yes, that's right because I was not here when that happened.

FARLEY: So when you readjusted you were ASA.

DAVIS: I was ASA yes, no longer SIS. We all had to change jobs because there wasn't any more traffic, and you can't read traffic that's not there.

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: And, there was an adjustment about, because people were coming back from overseas. Hugh Erskine came back, you came back, Charlie Gerhard came back. There had to be places, and you know that's always hard, finding places for people. It happened at kind of the right time. Well you know, it was better than having people come back now. Because now when people come back from overseas, it's a hard row to hoe, I think, because there's not always an opening --- some place that suits their



fancy and somebody else's too. And I know this has made for a lot of unhappiness, but I think everything seemed to work out. I didn't see anybody that looked like they were having a bad time at that point in time. There were an awful lot of new areas opening up all these new targets. We'd all been so concentrated on Japanese, so now the Russian problem built up, the Chinese problem built up and the Middle East problem. What did Hugh have? I think he might have had the German problem. I believe he did. That mixture of stuff, European, anyway. We had a lot of linguists that were out of business. I had Japanese linguists that had to take a grade drop because there weren't any more Japanese linguists jobs. We had a lot of retreads. Paul Gerhart was one of them.

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: And, I saw somebody else's name in here. Where is that thing? Anyway, they all had to take a cut, and I would like to see if you tried to get people to take a step back now.

FARLEY: They wouldn't do it now. Did we have an effort against the Chinese during World War II?

DAVIS: Not to my knowledge.

FARLEY: So that was started up pretty much (talking blocked by Mrs. Davis)

DAVIS: There might have been something there, I don't know. Now there might have been a small effort. No, but I can't remember. I don't know whether there was or not, there might have been something going. They were probably keeping track of the traffic and some of that kind of thing. But then, that other traffic came along.

FARLEY: Do you ever recall any effort against the British? And I'm thinking from a COMSEC standpoint.

DAVIS: Yes.

FARLEY: Communications security effort. We did have some?

DAVIS: Yes. Wait a minute, yes, I don't know about that now, I was thinking about

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FARLEY: Ok.

DAVIS: I'm sorry, honest. You know that one.

FARLEY: There were so many of those organization charts.

DAVIS: Yes, well this one was, that's John, back when he's Army. This is organization B2, B4. This was the Army system. I don't know anyway, but, you know those. Here's SP5 Caracristi, I see her down there, P2 Berryman.

FARLEY: Did they call it "P2" then?

DAVIS: Yes, P2 Berryman, SP5 Caracristi. See I had all those Lieutenants, 2nd Lieutenant Advark, and Hunter, and Weiss, that wasn't...

FARLEY: Rube Weiss?

DAVIS: That was Rube, yes. Oh, Rube was the light of my life. Funniest guy, used to go in and shave, after he came to work, and stuff like that. He was so funny. We just loved him.

FARLEY: We had a lot characters, right?

DAVIS: Yes, he was a great guy, I loved him.

FARLEY: I had one fellow tell me, who is now a professor at Carnegie-Mellon, say that was the most satisfying time of his life.

DAVIS: I believe it.

FARLEY: Being thrown together with so many intelligent people, from various walks of life.

DAVIS: I think it was one of the finest organizations I could ever find. I felt this way, and I've heard people say this about NSA. Bill Perry, you know, who was Under Secretary. Bill Perry was a good friend of my husband's and

Bill said, he had never seen such a fine group of people in one organization in his life.

FARLEY: That's quite a compliment.

DAVIS: Well, it's true.

FARLEY: Right.

DAVIS: I trust that it's still true, but I know it was. I mean you just couldn't have found a finer group. You get your duds along the way here and there, but I think, by and large, the intelligence of this group, and I can say this because I don't have much. But the people that you were associated with, I mean, it was challenging, and interesting, and wonderful people, wonderful organization. A much finer organization than others. I had a chance to go to CIA, right after they were formed. In fact I was recruited several times by them at Arlington Hall. I didn't want any part of it myself. I was perfectly happy at NSA. I wouldn't go.

FARLEY: What did you do from 1946 to 1949? What sort of a job did you have?

DAVIS: That's when I had that Chinese job.

FARLEY: You had that all during that time?

DAVIS: No, not all during the time. I had it the beginning part of the time, and then when the Russian problem boomed I took over the Russian Diplomatic Problem.

FARLEY: So that could have been 1948.

DAVIS: And that might have been late 47, something like that because I'd been in there for several years before I left in 49. And, I'd been in there a couple of years.

FARLEY: Was that an interesting problem, the Chinese problem? Was it kind of dull?

(END OF TAPE II, SIDE A)

DAVIS: I didn't care for the Chinese problem nearly as much as I did the Russian problem. The Russian problem was more interesting. The interesting thing about the Russian problem, as far as running the Russian problem or whatever you called it, the Red problem started. The Red Chinese problem started. So we had to have two Chinese Sections -- the real Chinese and the Communist Chinese.

FARLEY: The good guys and the bad guys.

DAVIS: The good guys and the bad guys so we really had two sections. Lois, Ann Solomon's old roommate, was back in that other problem with Fred Bright. Do you know Fred?

FARLEY: I know Fred well.

DAVIS: I probably had 20 people working on the Red problem. Milt Zaslow was working on the other one. He worked for me when he came back from Army.

FARLEY: I didn't know that.

DAVIS: He and Al, oh gosh, what was Al's name? Little lightly built, dark haired guy. He and Milt were real good friends. All right, you probably wouldn't remember anyway. I can still see Milt sitting right back there.

FARLEY: The Soviet problem. <sup>were</sup> we quite successful and <sup>we</sup> were turning out some pretty good intelligence in 47?

DAVIS: Oh Lord, yes. Oh yes.

FARLEY: It was readable in other words.

DAVIS: Oh it was good, it was real readable, yes. We were reading it fine. One reason we were reading it was because during World War II or some point in time they were not able to get any new code material out. Portland was using material that had been used by Ottawa and Bangkok was using material that had been in Jakarta and things like this. If you could find out where the switches were, you had duplicates. I mean you got depths, and if you

got depths you could read it. And that's how we got into the Russian Dip problem, because they were reusing their key. It was one time key re-used.

FARLEY: Amazing.

DAVIS: And they were reusing their pads, just passing them around from Embassy to Embassy, because they obviously weren't able to make any more or get them dispersed. But we were reading it, and of course there was a lot of lend-lease traffic in there. Where we gave them their ships and things like that. We were reading all that lend-lease stuff. You could almost just lay a plain text message on. Now, there was collateral, that was where a lot of plain text collateral was very valuable, because you could find plain text that had been enciphered.

FARLEY: What a crib.

DAVIS: Big cribs yes, and it was, a real interesting problem. Of course, before I left here in 49, after the lend-lease stuff was kind of gone, and we were able to get out one time pads it became a very difficult problem. I left and I came back and ran that problem again in 52. Then when we moved out here in 55, I left the problem and came out here with Herb Conley because they didn't bring any crypt people out. I don't know why. Herb convinced me I should come out and sort of be the cryptanalyst for the union or something. I'm not sure that that was the smartest thing to do but anyway I did and at that point I was kind of at 6's and 7's anyway. Then I went to work on the missile problem. That's right. We started the missile problem. And that was with Frank Rowlett and Les Rutledge. I ran the [redacted] missile problem. [redacted]

FARLEY: [REDACTED]

DAVIS: Ahu.

FARLEY: [REDACTED]

DAVIS: Then I left that problem. I'm getting as bad as my Dad, he used to be able to remember what he did as a kid, but he couldn't tell you what he did yesterday.

FARLEY: Yesterday. Well, it happens to people. I forget when I go down to the basement to get a tool what I came down for.

DAVIS: Oh I know where I went to work, I went from the missile problem. I think I went up with Dr. Klitzke. What were we working?

FARLEY: Soviet problem?

DAVIS: I think we were back on the Soviet problem. Yes, because Annie was running the East German problem at that point, and we were running the Soviet problem again with Hank Herzog and that gang.

FARLEY: He was Chief of the Soviet Section?

DAVIS: Yes, that's right. That was when I got married and came out here to live. From then on my life was fairly hectic as far as really concentrating. That's when I found out you can't really give yourself to two things very well. I found I was running a day nursery here, at Ft. Meade. I was trying. I had to entertain, there wasn't any three ways about it, and there was just an awful lot to do and it was awful hard to do two things and do justice to either one of them. When we went back to Ft. Meyer I discontinued working cause John was ACSI at that point. We had 75 Foreign Attache's, all of them required some kind of attention from Momma and Papa both. They said we could no longer do any of the entertaining at the club. We had to do all our entertaining at home at that point because we had some sergeants who were working for us. They said well, no more entertaining at the club,

there's no money for that. You do it at home. So that meant an awful lot of dinner parties because you had to have a dinner party when anybody came and you had to have a dinner party when they left. With 75 coming and going, you had a dinner party about 3 nights a week and that's a job, even if you're not doing the work. You have to plan it and do the shopping, and so I didn't work. Then when the Vietnam problem started. I said I just have to go back to work. I came back to work on the Vietnam problem. I enjoyed it very much, except for the fact that I just felt that the Agency's heart wasn't in it. I don't think it was only the Agency, I think it was the populace.

FARLEY: That's right.

DAVIS: It was everything. I will never know why we got into a mess like that and nobody really acted like we were in it. It's high treason as far as I'm concerned, that whole thing. As you can tell I'm still hot under the collar about the whole thing.

FARLEY: The boys felt that way too, that it was a second-class war and they were over there and nobody was backing them.

DAVIS: Well, they were right.

FARLEY: Absolutely.

DAVIS: I wouldn't like to tell them that, but they were right. And I could understand why some of the next generation said, "Uh Uh, you're not getting me involved in anything like that," and they became kind of hippies and drop outs and everything else, I understand. I don't like it, but I could see why, because I think we let them down.

FARLEY: I agree.

DAVIS: And I'm just upset.

FARLEY: I don't want to cut this short but there's a mass exodus about 3:00.

DAVIS: Oh, all right.

FARLEY: Out of the Agency.

DAVIS: I better go.

FARLEY: Is it possible that you might want to come back some other time.

DAVIS: I'd love to come back.

FARLEY: That's, great, that's wonderful, I enjoy it. Would you come back and read that and then we can talk about Vietnam in detail.

DAVIS: All right.

FARLEY: What you did as a whatever, analyst type work you were doing or management type.

DAVIS: No, I was working.

FARLEY: Working?

DAVIS: Ahu. With Alice Sashockly and  and Norm Klar.

FARLEY: Oh is that right.

DAVIS: Yeah, we were...

FARLEY: What was he, a Commander or Lieutenant Commander by then.

DAVIS: Lieutenant Commander I think.

FARLEY: Oh yes.

DAVIS: Yes, I saw Norm at Bobbie's retirement. I think that's the last time I saw him.

FARLEY: He's still in the building, I believe.

DAVIS: I believe, well, I couldn't tell whether he was or not from what he said, I just didn't know.

FARLEY: He remarried what, a year or so ago.

DAVIS: My gosh, you know, I thought I didn't recognize that woman.

FARLEY: Yes, he remarried. His wife had an accident, or died, or cancer, whatever.

DAVIS: Oh, I didn't know that.

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*Sashockly*

*Same person*



FARLEY: Anyway he married a couple years ago or a year ago.

DAVIS: Oh, well you see I didn't know that. He lost a child.

FARLEY: Yes, and then his wife.

DAVIS: Well, I didn't know about his wife. I had met his wife. We had had a few little office do's or something like that. When I saw him at the Bobbie Inman's retirement I thought, I don't I didn't recognize her. I haven't seen her that much, but Norm looked so well and he seemed so much more outgoing than he'd ever been.

FARLEY: Maybe so, maybe a new life.

DAVIS: A new life I think.

FARLEY: Must be.

DAVIS: Yes.

FARLEY: He's a pleasant fellow. We interviewed him on a couple projects.

DAVIS: He's a very nice guy. I sat side by side with Norm on the Vietnam problem.

FARLEY: I'd like to hear more about that, but again, at your convenience. I'd be delighted to have you back.

DAVIS: Well, I was going to say, if you plan to have John come out sometime, if you would like to. Now we're leaving about the 7th of January and we won't be back till mid-March. I'd prefer not to do anything between now and Christmas.

FARLEY: Of course, of course.

DAVIS: But maybe, if you wanted to do something between Christmas and the 7th of January, we might be able to come out for an afternoon and you could talk to him or talk to me.

FARLEY: That would be great.

DAVIS: You can call him and decide about that.

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: That's a very good looking suit you've got on.

~~SECRET~~

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FARLEY: Thank you.

DAVIS: Very nice.

FARLEY: Appreciate that.

DAVIS: It really is.

FARLEY: This is a PX special, probably.

DAVIS: It is? John needs a new suit, I've just been admiring it very nice.

FARLEY: Do we have any classification on what you've talked about so far, you want to make it TOP SECRET CODEWORD, OR SECRET COMINT CHANNELS or what do you think, up to date. I think it should be SECRET.

DAVIS: I think it should be SECRET because I've said some things I wouldn't like some guys to hear.

FARLEY: Do you want it higher than that, you want it TOP SECRET? We can put it TOP SECRET.

DAVIS: Oh, I don't, I would hate for he to hear all the things I said about him.

FARLEY: He didn't hear anything.

DAVIS: I don't think so either. I don't know whether it would be smart for me to go on the tape as saying that I think the way we acted was treasonous either.

FARLEY: We can make it "sensitive," we can make it "eyes only," handle cautiously.

DAVIS: I don't think it needs to be codeword, I haven't said anything codeword. I mean I haven't divulged anything that isn't probably down in the archives. That's one reason why I didn't come back to work. You know I came out here and I couldn't do it. I had spent so many years of my life keeping it a secret, that I could not declassify material. I came one day.

FARLEY: Is that right.

DAVIS: And I said, I can't do this, it's completely against my grain. I won't do it, but I still think it's wrong.

~~SECRET~~

FARLEY: I do too.

DAVIS: I haven't changed my mind a bit.

FARLEY: And everyone who was ever in the business feels that way, and I'm talking about 200 people I knew in Australia, and maybe 20 of them at a reunion and they said it's unbelievable what you people are doing now.

DAVIS: I know.

FARLEY: They couldn't believe it, they were taught to believe...

DAVIS: Well I think it's all wrong. I think it's absolutely wrong. It's just exactly like what has happened here with this guy writing this book ("Puzzle Palace"). You leave the door open a little bit and somebody pushes it a little farther, a little farther, and the first thing you know we're going to be in worse shape than CIA.

FARLEY: It's happening.

DAVIS: Somebody tells me that one of the Baltimore papers is running articles on the NSA right now.

FARLEY: Oh, is that right? I didn't see those.

DAVIS: I didn't either, but it's evidently on a current, like once a week there is a chapter 1, chapter 2, chapter 3 on NSA. They're going to do to us what they did to the CIA.

FARLEY: These will be parking lots rather than offices.

DAVIS: I think it was all wrong, this declassification bit, burn it if you want to, but don't declassify.

FARLEY: Don't let everybody see it.

DAVIS: Nobody's gone over and read what Russia -- Russia won't even let you get a phone book.

FARLEY: Let's make this ~~SECRET~~, I don't want to say sensitive, just plain ~~SECRET~~.

~~SECRET~~

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DAVIS: It's not codeword I don't think, I haven't really revealed anything that would help anybody break a code.

FARLEY: No! No! I don't think so.

DAVIS: I don't think it's codeword, it's SECRET. I wouldn't like it to be down in the Archives.

FARLEY: No, it won't be. What I'll do is, if you don't come out again for a while, I'll send you the regular form where you can say that these tapes should be heard only by legitimate researchers and historians at the discretion of the Historian or the Director.

DAVIS: Well now everybody that hears this will have clearance won't they?

FARLEY: Absolutely.

DAVIS: Probably a TOP SECRET clearance, at least, a TOP SECRET clearance.

FARLEY: Yes.

DAVIS: Well, might hurt somebody's feelings but I don't care.

FARLEY: But it can be, everybody can hear it or nobody can hear it and in between. The ones that most people choose is legitimate historians, blessed by the Director or the Chief of Historian section.

DAVIS: Yes, sure.

FARLEY: Ok, that's good. I like to keep these classified.

DAVIS: Oh, I think it's, please.

FARLEY: On occasion, somebody, if it's unclassified will say I have a right to hear that being an American citizen, and all of that garbage.

DAVIS: And that's, all of that garbage is right. No, let's make it SECRET.

FARLEY: All right.

DAVIS: Ok, please.

FARLEY: So until next time thank you so much.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

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DAVIS: No. it's been my pleasure, I've enjoyed every minute of it. I may come back to work.

FARLEY: It's been wonderful.

~~SECRET~~